



Support for Lebanon's WTO Accession Role of the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Enquiry Point

Beirut, Lebanon
August 18, 2010

Agenda

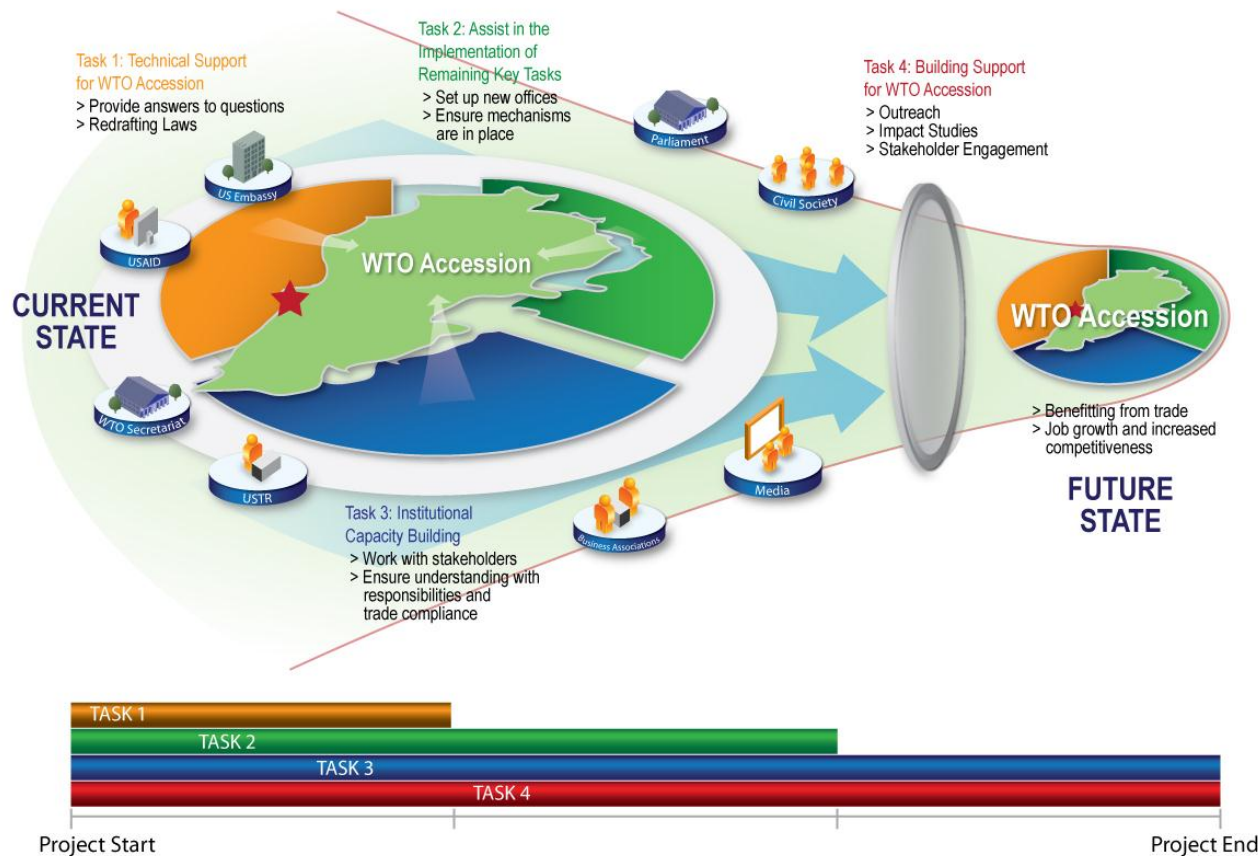
- Project Overview
- Short Briefing on WTO requirements on TBT Enquiry point
- Coordination between Various Authorities in Lebanon

Project Overview

➤ **USAID funded Project : “Support for Lebanon’s WTO Accession”**

- **OBJECTIVE:** To assist the Government of Lebanon (GOL) in completing the process of acceding to the WTO by 2010, building the capacity within the GOL institutions to meet the obligations undertaken under the accession, introducing the necessary reforms to fully comply with all the WTO agreements, and building the internal support for WTO accession to ensure sustainability of the reforms and maximization of the benefits from accession.
- The results we achieve with the GOL and the private sector will create a better trade and business environment that assists in the stimulation of economic growth and job creation by fostering trade, enhancing competitiveness, and expanding private sector investment.
 - Task 1: Technical Support for WTO Accession
 - Task 2: Implementation of Remaining Key Reforms
 - Task 3: Institutional Capacity Building
 - Task 4: Building Support for WTO Accession

The Project has an integrated approach to WTO Accession, maximizing flexibility and responsiveness



As demonstrated by the adjacent figure, implementation of reforms (Task 2) must begin even while the accession process (Task 1) is ongoing. Reform and accession cannot occur in the absence of capacity among Lebanese stakeholders (Task 3). Without the support and engagement of civil society and the private sector (Task 4), the likelihood of success in all other Tasks is limited.

The WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade

- The basic aim of the TBT Agreement is to ensure that technical barriers to trade and not create unnecessary obstacles to trade.
- Technical Regulations
- Standards
- Conformity Assessment Procedures

WTO Definition of Technical Regulation - TBT Agreement Annex 1

“Document which lays down product characteristics or their related processes and production methods, including the applicable administrative provisions, with which compliance is mandatory. It may also include or deal exclusively with terminology, symbols, packaging, marking or labelling requirements as they apply to a product, process or production method.”

Objective of Technical Regulations

“Technical Regulations shall not be more trade-restrictive than necessary to fulfil a legitimate objective”.

- Protection of national security
- Prevention of deceptive practices
- Protection of human health or safety
- Protection of animal or plant life or health
- Protection of environment

WTO Definition of Standard TBT Agreement Annex 1

“ Document approved by a recognized body, that provides, for common and repeated use, rules, guidelines or characteristics for products or related processes and production methods, with which compliance is not mandatory. It may also include or deal exclusively with terminology, symbols, packaging, marking or labelling requirements as they apply to a product, process or production method.”

WTO Definition of Conformity Assessment Procedure- TBT Agreement Annex 1

“Any procedure used, directly or indirectly to determine that relevant requirements in technical regulations or standards are fulfilled”.

Requirement for an Enquiry Point

- Article 10.1 of the WTO Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade stipulates that:

“Each Member shall ensure that an enquiry point exists which is able to answer all reasonable enquiries from other Members and interested parties in other Members...”

What is an Enquiry Point?

- A single contact point to which any relevant enquiries can be made
- Responsible for obtaining the answers from the relevant national bodies and replying to the country making the enquiry

Responsibilities of the TBT Enquiry Point

- Answer all reasonable questions
- Provide relevant documents regarding:
 - ❖ Technical regulation
 - ❖ Mandatory and voluntary standards
 - ❖ Mandatory and voluntary conformity assessment procedures
 - ❖ Membership in international and regional standardizing bodies and conformity assessment systems, as well as bilateral and multilateral arrangements
 - ❖ Location of notices
 - ❖ Location of enquiry points

The Enquiry point should

- Collect/disseminate notifications received from other WTO members
 - Exporters
 - Government agencies
 - Other stakeholders
- Coordinate comments on notifications from stakeholders
- Submit comments
- Follow-up

Coordination Between Various Authorities in Lebanon and the TBT Enquiry point

- Provide copies of proposed regulations to Enquiry point (LIBNOR)
- Provide copies of proposed regulations to Notification Authority (MOET)
- Establish good communication between the Enquiry point and Notification Authority.